Can You Live in Hidden Sin and Still Belong to God?

The sin of dishonest gain, often justified by human excuses, has today spread like a pandemic among those who claim to be with God. It is found in homes, in churches, in ministries, and in consciences that have been trained to tolerate wickedness under the mask of grace. People deceive themselves, thinking they can keep what they have stolen, hidden, or unjustly taken — and still enjoy God's blessing.

Many religious people today live in the sin of Judas, yet claim that God is with them. They deceive themselves by confusing religious activity with divine presence. But God cannot be manipulated by rituals, songs, or spiritual appearances. He searches the heart and demands truth.

When someone steals — whether through tax evasion or other means — and then considers themselves right before God, Scripture directly rebukes this self-deception. In Jeremiah 7:9–10 we read: "Will you steal… and then come and stand before me in this house, which bears my Name, and say, 'We are safe'— safe to do all these detestable things?"

This deception is so severe today that many believe they can enjoy manifestations of the Holy Spirit — such as speaking in tongues, prophecy, or other spiritual gifts — while still living in sin. But the Holy Spirit is not present where life is double-faced. He does not dwell where sin is tolerated, hidden, or justified.

To claim to have spiritual gifts while living in wickedness is an offense to God's righteousness and a deception of one's own conscience. The same deception is lived not only by those who obviously sin — such as thieves — but also by those who accept them in their midst without rebuke or separation.

Scripture shows us clearly in the case of Achan that the whole assembly was affected by the hidden sin of one man. God said: "Israel has sinned; they have violated my covenant… they have stolen, they have lied, they have put it with their own possessions" (Joshua 7:11). Although Achan was the one who sinned, God considered the whole people guilty. God was not with Israel until the sin was exposed and removed.

Thus, it is not only the sinner who is separated from God, but also the community that tolerates sin in its midst. To live in sin or to silently allow it is to be separated from the presence of God. You cannot deceive yourself into thinking God dwells in you while you keep what He hates.

Scripture warns plainly: “Many will say to me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?’ Then I will tell them plainly, ‘I never knew you. Away from me, you workers of lawlessness’” (Matthew 7:22– 23).

The words “I never knew you” make it unmistakable that the Holy Spirit was never present in the lives of those who lived in lawlessness. Therefore, the gifts they displayed were not authentic but counterfeit — from another source, foreign to God.

Where sin is kept, the gifts are not the work of the Holy Spirit, but a dangerous spiritual deception — an imitation produced by fallen angels who masquerade as angels of light. Scripture warns: “And no wonder, for Satan himself masquerades as an angel of light” (2 Corinthians 11:14).

This reality must be taken with the utmost seriousness: not every religious manifestation is evidence of God’s presence. The true work of the Holy Spirit is done in holiness, purity, and truth. God does not validate an unclean life, and the Holy Spirit does not dwell in a temple of wickedness.

That is why the Lord’s word through Jeremiah remains relevant: if your life does not reflect His righteousness, it is not enough to say, “The temple of the Lord, the temple of the Lord!” God says: “Reform your ways and your actions, and I will let you live in this place” (Jeremiah 7:3).

Scripture warns clearly: “Do not be deceived: God cannot be mocked. A man reaps what he sows” (Galatians 6:7). True worship is not measured by physical presence in a holy place, but by purity of heart and obedience to God’s commands. Only those who live in justice and truth are indwelt by the Holy Spirit and recognized as His own.

This post is an excerpt from the booklet “Life Lived in the Righteousness of Christ”, which you can read in full, free of charge. More studies and resources for spiritual awakening are available at https://www.unmodifiedword.com.